

**National Workshop on NTFP Taxation Policies and Management, 20 - 21 November
2006, New Delhi, India**

Background: Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) are critical to livelihoods of forest dependent communities in India. They are also a mainstay for a large number of small to large-scale enterprises engaged in processing and/or trading of NTFP-based value added products (especially in food, medicine, aromatics and pharmaceutical sectors). On one hand the resources allocated for research and development (R & D) efforts aimed at making NTFP harvesting/processing sustainable are minimal (and declining); on the other hand, NTFPs and products derived from it are taxed heavily right from the stage of collection. Very little of the revenue from taxation of NTFPs and/or NTFP-based products gets ploughed back into programs that can enhance the productivity and sustainability of NTFP resources (and post-harvest value addition) to, in turn, enhance the well being of forest-dependent communities. Cess has been widely used as a mechanism for NTFPs. However, it needs an analysis of several key economic, institutional and governance issues. The proposed national workshop will primarily focus on these issues.

Issues to be discussed

- Current scenario of NTFP taxation Policies and practices in India
- Current level of revenue generation from economically significant NTFPs
- Current level of R & D investments on NTFPs
- R & D needs of the NTFP sector in India
- Analysis of current cess mechanisms - the Agriculture Produce Cess Fund and Highway Development Cess
- Feasibility of an R & D Cess on NTFPs
- Setting up priorities for sustainability of NTFPs and utilization of a potential NTFP Cess Fund.

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